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TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 595 - JUNE 28, 1978

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING
PARIS FOR NICHOLAS MURPHY
OTHER ADDRESSEES FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION

1. EGYPT. EMBASSY CAIRO COMMENTS THAT EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS AND JOURNALISTS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ISRAEL'S PRE-CIPITOUS REJECTION OF THE LATEST EGYPTIAN PEACE PROPOSALS. THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO PUT ISRAEL ON THE DEFENSIVE, UNDER-LINE ITS "INTRANSIGENCE," AND AGAIN REMIND THE US THAT IT MUST REINVIGORATE THE PEACE PROCESS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

2. ISRAEL-WEST BANK: THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IN RECENT WEEKS SEEMS TO HAVE ADOPTED A SOFTER LINE IN ITS DAY-TO-DAY DEALINGS WITH WEST BANKERS. WHILE WEST BANKERS GENERALLY ARE PLEASED WITH THIS TURN OF EVENTS, THEY ARE CAREFUL TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THEIR APPROVAL OF THIS DEVELOP-MENT AND THEIR CONTINUED REJECTION OF BEGIN'S SELF-RULE SCHEME.

3. THE MOST RECENT NOTEWORTHY DEVELOPMENT IN ISRAELI-WEST BANK RELATIONS WAS DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN'S TOUR OF THE WEST BANK ON JUNE 20, DURING WHICH HE DISPLAYED UN-CONFIDENTIAL

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PRECEDENTED FLEXIBILITY. AT HEBRON, FOR EXAMPLE, HE ASSURED HIS AUDIENCE THAT ISRAEL HAS NO DESIRE "TO INTER-FERE WITH YOUR LIVES" AND ARGUED THAT ISRAELIS AND WEST BANKERS "MUST FIND WAYS AND METHODS SO THAT WE CAN LIVE TOGETHER." ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, WEIZMAN PLEDGED TO TAKE ACTION TO RESOLVE SEVERAL OF THE LONGSTANDING GRIEVANCES OF THE INHABITANTS OF NABLUS AND HEBRON AGAINST THE ISRAELI MILITARY GOVERNMENT.

4. IN NABLUS, WEIZMAN APPROVED THE IMPORT AND INSTALLA-TION OF THREE NEW ELECTRICAL GENERATORS FOR EXPANDING NABLUS' MUNICIPAL POWER PLANT. (THE CITY HAD LONG DECLINED TO TIE ITS POWER SYSTEM TO THE ISRAELI ELECTRICAL GRID FOR FEAR OF FUTURE DEPENDENCE. THE ISRAELIS, FOR THEIR PART, HAD REFUSED TO GIVE PERMISSION FOR THE NEW GENERATORS.) HE ALSO APPROVED THE DRILLING OF NEW WATER WELLS AND PROMISED TO ESTABLISH STRICTER CONTROLS OVER IDF SECURITY SEARCHES. IN HEBRON, HE APPROVED THE RETURN OF TWO NOTABLES WHO HAD BEEN DEPORTED EARLIER FOR SECURITY REASONS. HE ALSO CONSENTED TO IMPROVEMENTS IN HEBRON'S ELECTRICAL PLANT AND THE GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL.

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5. IT ISUNCLEAR WHETHER THIS NEW APPROACH IS GOVERNMENT POLICY OR WEIZMAN'S OWN HANDIWORK. A YEDIOT ARTICLE SAID THAT BEGIN HAD TAKEN WEIZMAN TO TASK ON MONDAY FOR HIS MAGNANIMOUS GESTURES, SAYING THAT SUCH CONCESSIONS FELL UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR SECURITY AFFAIRS AND NOT THE DEFENSE MINISTER ALONE.

6. NEVERTHELESS, A LESS STRINGENT LINE TOWARD WEST BANKERS SERVES ISRAEL'S BROADER INTERESTS IN DEALING WITH THE REACTION TO ITS RESPONSE TO THE TWO US QUESTIONS. IT:

(A) EXHIBITS COOPERATION BETWEEN ARABS AND JEWS, THUS UNDERSCORING THE REASONABLENESS OF BEGIN'S SELF-RULE PROPOSAL;
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(B) TENDS TO DEFLECT INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM OF BEGIN'S WEST BANK POLICY BY DISPLAYING ISRAEL'S HUMANITARIAN INTEREST IN WEST BANK CONCERNS;

(C) DEFUSES TO SOME EXTENT THE NEGATIVE WEST BANK REACTION AND MAY FORESTALL VIOLENT INCIDENTS;

(D) DIVERTS ATTENTION FROM ISRAEL'S CONTINUED SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY ON THE WEST BANK.

7. IF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HOPES TO FOSTER BETTER RELATIONS WITH WEST BANKERS AS A MEANS OF PREPARING THE WAY FOR BEGIN'S AUTONOMY PLAN (SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS HAVE ASSERTED THAT THE SELF-RULE SCHEME IS ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED IN SMALL WAYS), THE WEST BANKERS INSIST THAT THEY WILL HAVE NO PART OF IT. NABLUS' MAYOR SHAKA HAS SAID THAT "NO PEOPLE IN THE WORLD WOULD WILLINGLY LIVE UNDER THE DOMINATION OF FOREIGN TROOPS." ANOTHER WEST BANKER COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD MERELY BE A CASE OF "EXCHANGING A MILITARY GOVERNOR FOR A CIVILIAN ONE."

8. THUS, WEST BANKERS HAVE BEEN QUICK TO NOTE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COOPERATION WITH WEIZMAN'S MILITARY GOVERNMENT AT THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL AND COLLABORATION WITH BEGIN'S SELF-RULE PROPOSAL. THE FORMER LARGELY FOLLOWS PAST PRACTICE AND IS DEEMED ESSENTIAL TO MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT; THE LATTER IS PATENTLY UNACCEPTABLE. INDEED, IF WEST BANKERS COME INCREASINGLY TO PERCEIVE BEGIN AS QUIETLY INITIATING HIS PLAN UNILATERALLY, THEN WE CAN EXPECT A VOCIFEROUS REACTION AND MORE INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AND UNREST. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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9. ISRAEL. GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER'S JUNE 28-30 VISIT TO ISRAEL WILL FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AND ISRAEL'S RELATIONS WITH THE EC. EMBASSY BONN NOTES THAT SOME FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS EXPECT THE VISIT TO BE DIFFICULT. GENSCHER WILL REITERATE GERMANY'S DISPLEASURE WITH BEGIN'S RESPONSE TO THE US QUESTIONS AND EXPRESS BONN'S VIEW THAT MORE FLEXIBILITY IS REQUIRED IN RESPONSE TO SADAT'S INITIATIVE. THE ISRAELIS ARE EXPECTED TO PRESS--UNSUCCESSFULLY--FOR CLOSER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE EC, BUT THEY MAY HAVE MORE SUCCESS REGARDING THEIR DESIRE TO INCREASE TARIFF PREFERENCES ON CITRUS FRUIT. EMBASSY BONN COMMENTS THAT, DESPITE THE FULL PLATE OF CONTENTIOUS ISSUES, ISRAELI-GERMAN RELATIONS ARE GENERALLY MORE POSITIVE THAN THEY APPEAR TO BE. (CONFIDENTIAL)

10. LEBANON. LEBANESE OFFICIALS ARE WORRIED THAT THE RECENT KILLING OF TONY FRANJIYAH WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY LEAD TO COMPLICATIONS WHICH WERE DIFFICULT TO FORESEE. THEY SEEM SURE THAT THE FRANJIYAH CLAN WOULD SOON STRIKE A SIMILAR BLOW AT THE GEMAYELS. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY APPEAR UNWILLING TO ATTEMPT A FRANJIYAH-GEMAYEL RECONCILIATION.

11. ASSESSING THE AFTERMATH OF THE ASSASSINATION, EMBASSY BEIRUT OBSERVED THAT LEBANON MAY HAVE REACHED A POLITICAL TURNING POINT. THE CHRISTIAN "LEBANESE FRONT" IS NOW IN SHAMBLES; EVEN THE SHAMOUNS MUST BE HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF PHALANGE MOTIVES. WITH THE PROSPECTS OF A UNITED CHRISTIAN GROUPING NOW GONE, IT IS POSSIBLE NOW FOR SARKIS TO MAKE SOME CONTROVERSIAL DECISIONS. IT REMAINS PROBLEMATIC, HOWEVER, WHETHER HE WILL CHOOSE TO DO SO. (CONFIDENTIAL)

12. PDRY. THE FIGHTING THAT BEGAN IN ADEN ON MONDAY APPARENTLY ENDED EARLY YESTERDAY, AND THE CITY IS REPORTED QUIET. THERE ARE NO FIRM INDICATIONS OF FIGHTING OR UNREST

IN OTHER PARTS OF SOUTH YEMEN, BUT SUCH INFORMATION MIGHT NOT REACH US IMMEDIATELY. ADEN RADIO CONTINUES TO JUSTIFY THE EXECUTION OF PRESIDENT SALIM RUBAYYA ALI BY REPEATING CHARGES THAT HE HAD DEVIATED FROM THE PRINCIPLE OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP. IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE TENSION WITH NORTH YEMEN, THE SOUTH YEMENIS ARE STRESSING THEIR COMMITMENT TO CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

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AND ARE WARNING OF PLOTS DESIGNED TO DISRUPT RELATIONS.
SOVIET REACTION TO THE EVENTS IN SOUTH YEMEN HAS THUS
FAR BEEN CONFINED TO A TASS ANNOUNCEMENT OF ALI'S
EXECUTION. (CONFIDENTIAL) VANCE

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